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The growing demand for food, raw materials and energy:

opportunities for agriculture, challenges for food security

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We, the Agriculture Ministers of 62 States, representing all continents, have assembled here on 17th January 2015 during the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) for the 7th Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Summit. Based on our shared beliefs, we are aware of the great responsibility to ensure food security and nutrition for a growing global population. This remains our most important aim as highlighted in international documents such as the Rio + 20 document "*The future we want*".

We are convinced that the fight against hunger and malnutrition must go hand in hand with the fight against poverty. Only resilient, diversified and sustainable agrifood systems can provide the foundation for achieving the human right to adequate food and for supplying people with adequate supplies of nutritious food or enabling them to feed themselves.

The many and diverse activities carried out during the "*International Year of Family Farming*" have underlined the crucial role that family farming plays for economic development, in particular in rural areas. Well-functioning and competitive agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors, which generate decent work and income, contribute greatly to combating poverty.

However, agriculture goes beyond providing food and feed.

The limited supplies of fossil raw materials, and the impact their extraction and use have on the environment and the global climate, underline the necessity of replacing non-renewable with renewable resources. This has led to an increase in demand for agricultural raw materials for the non-food sector.

We welcome the fact that these new markets provide job and income opportunities for agricultural holdings, including smallholders, and also for upstream and downstream sectors. These markets can thus also play an important role in combating poverty, if smallholders are appropriately integrated in these markets.

The agricultural sector's potential regarding the production of food and renewable resources can help diversify the sector and strengthen its resilience to crises. We therefore see new opportunities to develop this production and believe there is great potential for promoting economic development and expanding people's livelihoods, in particular in rural areas and for vulnerable people.

A sustainable and efficient agricultural sector which feeds the people is the foundation of the bioeconomy, being one of the strategies for achieving our ultimate goal of sustainable development in its three dimensions (economic, social and environment), considering national circumstances and priorities. The idea of the bioeconomy is based on natural cycles of materials and encompasses all sectors of industry that process, use, and trade with renewable resources, for instance with plants, animals, micro-organisms, and their derivatives. The forestry, horticultural and waste sectors may, just as the agricultural sector, also supply raw materials for the bioeconomy.

We advocate that agriculture should seize the opportunities arising from bio-based and sustainable value chains but at the same time we emphasise agriculture's overarching responsibility to supply accessible and adequate food to a growing global population. We regard it as our joint task to establish policy frameworks for agriculture that enable the growing demand for food and sustainable raw materials to be satisfied without endangering food security.

The development of bioeconomy should aim to ensure the right to adequate food and to reduce poverty, in a sustainable manner, while preventing risks of compromising food security.

We agree that we must meet three challenges in order to fulfil this task:

Use the opportunities arising from bioeconomy

Ensure sustainability of production and use

Ensure the primacy of food

If we are able to successfully meet these challenges, we will be able to develop a sustainable bioeconomy that has many and diverse value chains and plays a crucial role in the welfare of humankind: securing adequate food supplies, addressing the challenges of climate change and sustainably managing natural resources. Agriculture could therefore strengthen its leading role in this respect through the sustainable production of raw materials.

We are well aware that, embedded within a coherent policy framework, we need to use different solutions to reach this goal, namely solutions that are adapted to regional, national and local needs, options and conditions and that take full advantage of the economic, social and ecological opportunities that bioeconomy offers.

Use the opportunities arising from bioeconomy

Agricultural raw materials have been used as food, feed, building materials and in crafts and trades since time immemorial. They are now also finding increased use in industry and the energy sector. Agriculture and rural areas can benefit from existing and new bioeconomy value chains. These value chains need further development and innovation. They provide access to promising markets for a large number of agricultural products and are generating new stimulus worldwide. Bioeconomy thus secures existing jobs while also creating new ones and generating additional income. This development offers agricultural holdings - including family farms - in developing countries, emerging economies and industrialised countries enormous opportunities to participate in the rapidly growing markets with a large range of different products.

The bioeconomy offers countries, particularly those with scarce fossil resources yet ample land for agriculture and forestry, an opportunity to increase the value-generation potential of their agricultural production and to boost their economic strength through the refinement to renewable products.

We, the agriculture ministers assembled at the GFFA 2015, advocate:

taking full advantage of the potential of the bioeconomy by:

- promoting integrated systems that combine production of food and non-food products, in order to diversify the agricultural sector and strengthen its resilience to crises;
- establishing bioeconomy value chains and networks as drivers of the economy in rural areas and, to this end, developing and strengthening sustainable markets for bio-based products;
- addressing socio-economic problems, including those of smallholders and young farmers;
- tapping the new, bio-based potential for innovation and value generation through dedicated research and development projects;

and to this end advocate:

- developing and implementing bioeconomic frameworks and concepts adapted to the conditions of the respective regions and levels of development;
- using examples of best practice to conduct an international exchange of experiences on the successful establishment of bio-based value chains and networks;
- promoting education and research, the transfer of bioeconomy know-how and technology, in particular to developing countries, and the training of experts in the food and non-food sectors;
- providing and evaluating data, both nationally and internationally, on the different ways of using plant-based biomass in order to establish a reliable basis for policy decisions;
- promoting scientific studies on synergies and trade-off effects between the production of renewable resources for the food sector and for the non-food sector.

Ensure sustainability of production and use

Bioeconomy is based on natural resources. The sustainability of producing for the food and non-food sectors depends on a number of crucial factors: the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, the careful stewardship of soil and water, and equitable access to and use of natural resources. Sustainability of production and use also requires a resource-efficient increase in agricultural production, an improvement of agricultural know-how and training and a reduction of food losses which go hand in hand with environmental protection nature conservation and climate stewardship and also include social aspects and agro-ecological practices.

The *"Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security"* and the *"Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems"*, both adopted by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), are important milestones on the way to more sustainability. Accepted international voluntary and market-based production standards and sustainability certificates can help protect the natural means of production and at the same time increase consumer acceptance for sustainably produced, bio-based products. Existing systems offer a good platform for further development. Furthermore, we appreciate the sustainability indicators developed by the Global Bioenergy partnership (GBEP).

We, the agriculture ministers assembled at the GFFA 2015, advocate:

- expanding and improving sustainable agricultural production methods and the use of renewable resources with the aim of sustainably managing natural resources and supporting climate stewardship through the mechanism of knowledge, adaptation and mitigation funds;
- transferring know-how and technology, in particular to developing countries, in order to support international efforts to make the production of renewable resources for the food and non-food sectors sustainable;
- implementing and applying the *"Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security"* and the *"Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems"* at regional, national and local level, and we support the FAO in its efforts;
- developing voluntary sustainability standards and certification systems on a partnership basis;
- promoting the development of scientific analysis related to sustainable methods of production and the use of renewable resources;
- improving consumer-awareness about sustainable, bio-based products.

Ensure the primacy of food:

Further expansion of bioeconomy is only acceptable if feeding humankind takes priority.

The current growing demand for renewable resources for the non-food sector coincides with a growing global population that must be provided with an adequate supply of food. To achieve the priority goal of ensuring food security while at the same time taking full advantage of the potential of the bioeconomy, production must be sustainably increased, losses must be reduced, and efficiency of use must be enhanced by methods such as the coupling and cascading of uses. These methods allow the processing of agricultural biomass into high-quality food/feed products or materials for industry. Arising residues can be used to produce bioenergy.

Scarce resources, such as land, water or nutrients, should be used in an environmentally sound and efficient manner. In certain regions the demands for renewable resources on the one hand and for food on the other may lead to increased competition for land and water. Land should not be used for non-agricultural purposes or for growing renewable resources at the expense of food security. The loss of productive land should be reduced.

Agricultural policy - in conjunction with globally coherent economic, trade, energy, environmental, research and development policies - must play its role in taking advantage of the opportunities provided by bioeconomy, monitoring and balancing the different uses and reducing the risk of excessive price volatility. A coherent policy and legislative framework for production and for markets supports food security.

We appreciate and acknowledge FAO's work in this regard, in particular the Bioenergy and Food Security (BEFS) Approach, which provides a sound foundation for making policy decisions that ensure the primacy of food security in the context of bioeconomy.

We, the agriculture ministers assembled at the GFFA 2015, advocate that

- the sustainable production of food remains the priority goal of bioeconomy, bearing in mind the Zero Hunger Challenge launched by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon;
- the "Global Strategic Framework on Food Security", the *"Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security", the "Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems"* and the "Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Adequate Food" are implemented and applied at regional, national and local level and that the Rio + 20 document "*The future we want*" is taken into due account;
- rural development strategies take different uses of agricultural biomass into account while respecting the primacy of food security;
- the policy impact assessment of any expansion in the cultivation of renewable resources pays due regard to the growing need for an adequate and nutritious supply of food;
- strategies and concepts for using agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes take account of the potential impact on food security, rural development policies and domestic value-added initiatives;
- innovative procedures, such as coupled and cascade use of biomass, are deployed to activate the unexploited potential of raw materials and residues;
- an international exchange of best-practice examples is promoted to implement the primacy of food security in regional, national and local strategies on rural development;
- FAO continues and intensifies its work on the primacy of food security in bioeconomy and provides information and pertinent policy advice for the benefit of its members;
- the measures adopted by GFFA 2014 on increasing productivity are supplemented by appropriate measures for increasing resource efficiency and minimising losses.

We emphasise that secure supplies of food, raw materials and energy, and indeed climate stewardship and nature conservation, are inconceivable without the sustainable production of biomass for the food and non-food sectors.

Hence bioeconomy links agriculture to global sustainability policy and assigns agriculture a central role in tackling the great challenges of our time.

We take on our responsibility in the international dialogue and press for the appropriate recognition of the importance of agriculture in the process of finalising the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

We therefore advocate the development and implementation of coherent policy frameworks for sustainable bioeconomy that enable the agricultural sector to provide an adequate and nutritious supply of food and at the same time to produce renewable resources for material and energy production. This issue should be further discussed in the context of Expo 2015.

We, the Agriculture Ministers, hereby state that tangible action and international cooperation are necessary to seize the opportunities provided by sustainable bioeconomy for agriculture and rural development while securing the primacy of food security and nutrition. We wish to follow up on these thoughts and believe that FAO in collaboration with other partners would provide the appropriate platform for this purpose.